

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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DATE ENTERED

CH-297

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Timber Neck, Cranes Low Grounds, Laurel Grove

AND OR COMMON

TIMBER NECK FARM (preferred)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

East side of intersection of Faulkner

Road and U.S. 301

CITY TOWN

Faulkner,

☒ VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

CODE  
024

COUNTY

Charles

CODE

017

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTURE	BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	YES RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	MILITARY	OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

J. Stewart Brinsfield, et al

STREET & NUMBER

Timber Neck Farm, P.O. Box 128

CITY TOWN

Faulkner,

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland 20632

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Charles County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Charles Street

CITY TOWN

La Plata,

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY TOWN

STATE

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CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

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Timber Neck Farm, formerly known as Laurel Grove, is located east and southeast of the intersection of Faulkner Road and U.S. Route 301, seven miles south of La Plata, Maryland. The main house is approached by a private drive nearly one mile in length and entered on the east side of Faulkner Road, about two hundred feet north of the intersection of Faulkner Road and U.S. Route 301.

The house is a two and one-half story, ell-shaped frame structure with a large double chimney with two-story pent on the north end. The front elevation, facing directly east, is three bays wide with the entrance door occupying the first bay from the south end. On the front slope of the gable roof are two pedimented dormers. The first floor windows, equal in their dimensions to those of the door, frame nine-over-nine sash. The second floor windows and the two dormers have six-over-six sash. Although there are presently no shutters at the windows, there are indications that they were once used. Extending across the three first floor bays is a one-story, shed roofed porch supported by brick piers and with plain square posts. The porch appears to date circa 1900-1925.

The rear elevation originally repeated the fenestration and door placement of the front, but a later wing conceals the first and second floor bays closest to the north end. The windows, door and dormers of the rear elevation are of the same dimensions, sash and plan as the front.

The south end of the house has a single door on the first floor level, two windows at the second floor level and one window in the gable. All windows are of six-over-six sash. The first floor door presumably once led to a detached or semi-detached kitchen.

The north end is dominated by a wide double chimney containing a two-story, shed roofed pent. The chimney rises as a solid wall to the second floor ceiling level, where it then separates into two freestanding stacks, each with a single brick tiled weathering and a corbeled cap. Centered in the chimney wall, on both floor levels, is a single four pane window to light the interior closets. The first floor window, however, was bricked in at a later date. One of the most interesting features of the chimney is a broad arched cellar entrance in the base.

The only other chimney in Charles County known to possess a similar feature is Chimney House (circa 1766) in Port Tobacco. There are three windows in this elevation. One, of six-over-six sash, is at the gable level. Flanking the chimney at the second floor level are two narrow windows of four-over-four panes. A first floor door occupies a location between the chimney and the northwest corner of the house. It was installed in the 20th century and opens onto a porch that extends across all three sides of the rear wing.

The clapboarding of the house was replaced at various times in the 19th

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**DESCRIPTION (continued)**

century. About thirty years ago it was completely covered with composition shingles. The roof, originally covered with wood shingles, is currently sheathed with asphalt ones. The eave cornice, dating from the early 19th century when the roof was replaced, is boxed and has standard ogee crown and bed moldings. In the late 19th or early 20th century the ends of the roof were extended about one foot beyond the end walls of the house. The house is built on brick foundation walls that rise about eight courses above ground level. Two wooden, barred, narrow windows with fixed sash on the front and rear elevations provide the cellar with light and ventilation.

On the interior the main block has a stair hall on the south end with two rooms on its north side. Although seemingly identifiable as a standard Federal plan, certain details establish Timber Neck as a transitional house, bridging the third and fourth quarters of the eighteenth century when earlier styles were being succeeded by a more standardized architecture.

Despite the fact that the first floor level has had various changes made to it there is substantial evidence of its original plan and appearance. The existing stair, which rises by a landing, dates from about the second quarter of the nineteenth century, but is of about the same plan and occupies the same location as its predecessor. It has a heavy Empire-style newel at the base with turned posts at the landing and second floor level. The balusters are also turned but the step ends and stair rail are unornamented. Before the existing stair was built the area directly beneath the first rise of steps was occupied by a second stair leading to the cellar. Mortice marks in the floors indicate that this earlier stairwell was framed by a balustrade. When the main stair was rebuilt the cellar stair was covered over and the area enclosed by a closet.

Two doors in the north wall of the hall open into the two north rooms. Originally, these doorways provided the only access to the two rooms. Unlike most end hall-double parlor plans, there was no door in the common wall to connect them. However, a door was installed at a later date, probably within the last thirty years.

Although most of the woodwork on this level is of a combination of Empire and Victorian styles, there is a sufficient amount of original woodwork to indicate that these rooms and the hall were handsomely, though fairly simply, furnished with two-piece window and door surrounds, chairrails and bold eight-panel doors, all characteristically eighteenth century in

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

profile. The original mantel in the northeast room was replaced by one of Victorian styling. An early mantel in the northwest room is of a fairly simple design, with reeded panels on the frieze and goughwork decorating the shelf. It is probably not dissimilar to that which framed the fireplace in the northeast room. In the mid-19th century the chimney closet (pent) in the northeast room was opened by removing the front wall and door. The ceiling level was arched and the whole arrangement, from floor to ceiling, faced with a flat wood surround. Evidence of shelves and window, however, remain. The pent door and some of the framing of the pent wall itself were removed and installed in a second floor bedroom of the later west wing. On the east side of the mantel in the northwest room is a second smaller closet. A curious feature of the northwest room is the presence of a wide Empire-style chairrail, a molding type that does not appear elsewhere in the house. Only one of the original two windows in this room remain. The other, the one closest to the northwest corner, was later enlarged to provide a door opening into the wing.

The second floor of the main block is divided into three rooms and a hall. Two bedrooms are located over and are of the same size as the two first floor rooms. The area over the first floor hall has a small room at the east end, with the first floor stairwell at the west end. Between the hall room and stairwell is a second stair to the attic. Stylistically similar to the main stair, it winds up along the south end from the southeast corner. The second floor doors, like those of the first floor, retain only their original beaded facings. The outer moldings were all replaced, as were the doors themselves, in the early 19th century. Only one original mantel remains and that is in the northwest room. It is remarkably similar in detail to the mantel directly below it. A marbelized mantel in the northeast room probably dates from the second quarter of the 19th century. On one side of both fireplaces is a chimney closet; the doors to both are of two wide vertical boards hung on wrought "H" hinges.

The windows in all three rooms and the hall have surrounds of a mid-19th century design. The west end window of the northwest room was later converted to a door that opens into the second floor hall of the wing. The hall stair leading to the attic is the same in detail as that connecting the first and second floors.

The attic has one large room over the two principal second floor bed-chambers and a small room at the east end of the hall. Structural and

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**DESCRIPTION (continued)**

other details indicate that the existing roof framing is a replacement of the original, probably constructed within the first quarter of the 19th century. There is little evidence of the plan of the original roof, though it is probable that it was not finished on the interior.

The two-story rear wing with shallow gable roof was built in two stages, the first probably dating from the middle of the 19th century and the second from early in this century. At one time a third one-story section stood at its west end. The wing is three bays wide on the south side, two bays wide on the north side, and has a single first floor door in the west end. A one-story, shed-roofed porch with plain square posts surrounds the wing on three sides. The first floor contains two rooms with a center stair providing access to two rooms and a hall above. The windows frame sash of two-over-two panes and the window surrounds are stylistically of the mid-19th century and later.

Timber Neck is currently in the process of restoration. The main block will be returned to its original appearance, although the attic chambers and 19th century roof dormers will be retained. On the interior the stair balustrade will be rebuilt in a fashion contemporary with the construction date of the house. All of the rooms, including halls, will be returned to their original 18th century appearance by using woodwork salvaged from house ruins of similar date in the region. The later enlarged first floor windows will also be returned to their earlier dimensions.

The later west wing will be removed and on this elevation of the main block a one-story porch of Federal plan will be built. The house will be extended on the south end by an addition appropriate in scale and appearance to the main block. The wing will house all necessary modern conveniences, including kitchen and bathrooms.

Included within this nomination are several of the 17th and 18th century archeological sites mentioned in the significance statement to give an idea of the importance of this location in those times. Just north of the house is the site of the 18th-century grist mill which was taken down in the past few years. (A photograph of this is enclosed.) East of the house is the site of a late 18th century barn, and bisecting the property at a northwest/southeast angle is a 17th-century road bed.

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PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
— PREHISTORIC	— ARCHEOLOGY PREHISTORIC	— COMMUNITY PLANNING	— LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	— RELIGION
— 1400-1499	X ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	— CONSERVATION	— LAW	— SCIENCE
— 1500-1599	— AGRICULTURE	— ECONOMICS	— LITERATURE	— SCULPTURE
X 1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	— EDUCATION	— MILITARY	X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
X 1700-1799	— ART	— ENGINEERING	— MUSIC	— THEATER
X 1800-1899	X COMMERCE	X EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	— PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	— COMMUNICATIONS	— INDUSTRY	— POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	— OTHER (SPECIFY)
		— INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES circa 1780

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Belain Posey

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although considered to be basically Federal in plan, Timber Neck is actually a transitional house, one that represents a final phase in the development of Charles County architecture. The house was built during a period when post-Georgian architectural styles, developed and popularized outside the region, began to influence and gradually succeed regionally traditional building styles and methods of construction. Despite the fact that the late 18th century witnessed a substantial increase in building activity within Charles County, Timber Neck, with its remaining characteristically 18th century woodwork is the best recorded example reflecting these changes in local architectural practices. It is of additional significance as one of only nine 18th century houses surviving in Charles County that were initially designed and built as full two-story buildings.

Timber Neck was probably built by Belain Posey in about 1780. The property actually comprises no less than eight individual tracts of land accumulated by the Posey family in the 17th and 18th centuries. Although earlier dwellings are known to have existed, the precise locations of their sites remain undetermined. The tract of land from which the property derives its name, but not the one on which the house was built, was patented by Edward Phillpot in 1713. Located at the east end of the farm and bordering Zachia Creek, it was acquired by Belain Posey in 1790.

The Zachia, which at this point flows into Allen's Fresh and is considered the headwater of the Wicomico River, was a navigable waterway in the 17th and 18th centuries. It was in the surrounding area that the earliest colonial settlements in Charles County occurred and the immediate environs of Timber Neck encompass a remarkable number of colonial sites.

Just north of the property, for instance, are the sites of Charles County's first courthouse, built in 1674, and a mill constructed by the Hanson family in 1776 to manufacture gunpowder for the state. Located southeast of the property stand the ruins of a flour mill built in 1672 by John Allen. In addition to Allen's mill, which flourished well into the 18th century and was owned at various times by several of the County's most prominent families, there were two ordinaries (taverns). Besides the proximity of the Zachia, for many years used as a means of transporting tobacco boats between inland farms and the warehouses and wharfs on

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)**

the Wicomico River, the immediate area was made further accessible by its location on a major land route, references to which appear in 17th and 18th century documents. The road bed is still easily discernable, particularly where it intersects Timber Neck Farm and continues through the swamp, passing the mill ruins and terminating at Allen's Fresh and the head of the Wicomico River. It is readily evident that Timber Neck, located in the midst of a center of social, agricultural and governmental activity, both witnessed and contributed to the early development of the region.

It is believed that Belain Posey built Timber Neck at a time when he was experiencing a rise in social position and financial prosperity. Active in political developments in the county during the Revolution, he was appointed to a committee of socially prominent men to elect a representative to the Continental Congress in 1774 and, in 1775, to collect funds within Trinity Parish for the purchase of arms and ammunition. He was also directly involved in the development of the Hansons' powder mill.

Belain Posey died intestate in about 1800. A widower, he left nine children, seven of them minors. His eldest son, Lawrence, assumed ownership of the 611-acre home plantation in 1802.

Little is known about Lawrence Posey except that he retained the farm, adding to it a nominal amount of acreage. He was, at the time of his death in 1827, a fairly wealthy man.

In 1848 the real estate of Lawrence Posey, Sr. was divided into two parcels. Ownership of the largest of these, 383 acres and the dwelling house, passed to Lawrence Posey, Jr.

In 1868 Lawrence Posey and his wife mortgaged the property. Experiencing increasing financial difficulties, they defaulted on the mortgage in 1878 and the property was put up for public auction soon afterwards. Then called Laurel Grove, the property included the house and 370 acres and was sold to Philip Simms of New Orleans. In 1917 it was bought by Thomas Bowling and remained in the possession of his heirs until 1975 when it was acquired by its present owners.

Timber Neck Farm is being developed by the present owners as an equestrian center. A major portion of the complex, however, will be located on the west end of the property and is not included in that

See Continuation Sheet #5

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)**

part of the farm designated for nomination. The portion of the property that includes the house and road site will be developed as a breeding farm with barns and fenced pastures.

The restoration of the main house to its 18th century appearance will preserve one of Charles County's architectural landmarks. The sympathetic development of the farm, and its limited public accessibility, will also serve to preserve and enhance the historical integrity of the area, linking together the many important 17th and 18th century sites existing on or immediately proximate to the farm.



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**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 175

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

njm

NAME / TITLE

Mr. J. Richard Rivoire

ORGANIZATION

Architectural Historian

DATE

December 10, 1976

STREET &amp; NUMBER

317 Charles Street

TELEPHONE

870-3318

CITY OR TOWN

La Plata,

STATE

Maryland 20646**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_

LOCAL \_\_\_\_

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

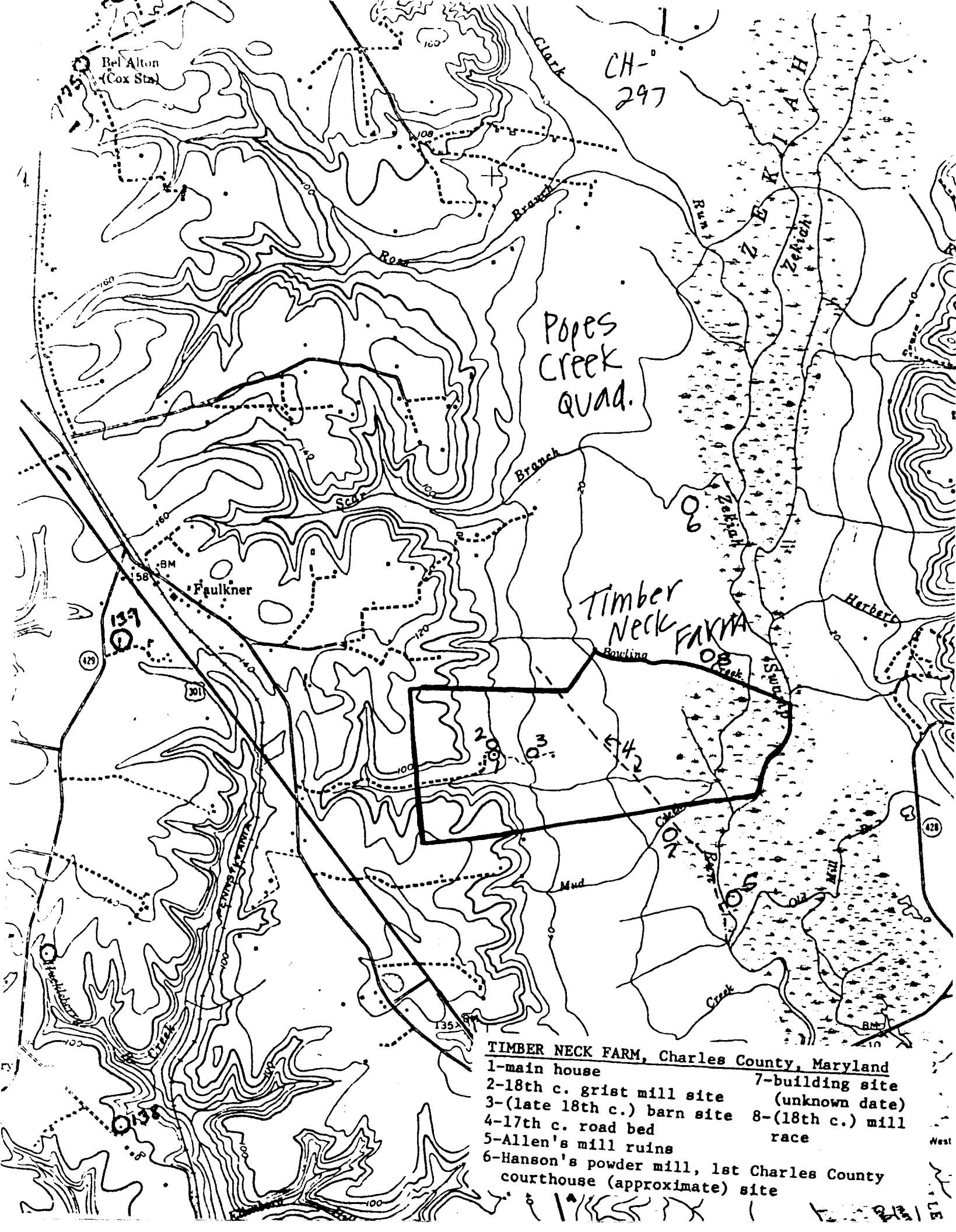
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



- TIMBER NECK FARM, Charles County, Maryland**
- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 1-main house                               | 7-building site  |
| 2-18th c. grist mill site                  | (unknown date)   |
| 3-(late 18th c.) barn site                 | 8-(18th c.) mill |
| 4-17th c. road bed                         | race             |
| 5-Allen's mill ruins                       |                  |
| 6-Hanson's powder mill, 1st Charles County |                  |
| courthouse (approximate) site              |                  |

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